

USDA Foreign Agricultural Service

# GAIN Report

Global Agricultural Information Network

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## Thailand

**Post:** Bangkok

### After Event Report - Chiang Mai International Food Festival

**Report Categories:**

Market Promotion/ Competition

**Approved By:**

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#### Report Highlights:

"TH1094" - This report assesses the results of the first Chiang Mai International Food Festival 2011 (CIFF 2011) held at the "Chiang Mai Hall" at the Central Plaza Chiang Mai Airport during July 14-18, 2011. The CIFF 2011 was a successful event composed of ten international booths, a Thai booth and additional 20 booths from local food and beverage companies. Attendee-traffic was about 2,000 per day which included housewives, end users, and the expat community.

**General Information:**

**Name of Activity:** Chiang Mai International Food Festival 2011 (CIFF 2011)

**Beginning/Ending Dates:** July 14-18, 2011

**City/Country:** "Chiang Mai Hall" Central Plaza Chiang Mai Airport

**Background about Chiang Mai:** "Chiang Mai Creative City - Strategic Plan and Roadmap" has highlighted Chiang Mai, the second largest city of Thailand and the capital of the ancient Kingdom of Lanna, as playing a prominent role as a national and regional centre for education, administration, tourism, food and agriculture, handicrafts, and design related activities. It is also consistently voted as a popular tourism, living and retirement centre.

The size of Chiang Mai's economy is comparatively small (Northern Thailand's Gross Regional Product (GRP) per capita is the second lowest amongst eight regions of Thailand) and there are limited jobs and business opportunities. A report commissioned by the Office of Knowledge Management in 2008 stated that the growth of Chiang Mai has been in the lower performing group of provinces. The economy is not diversified as Chiang Mai is very dependent on income from tourism and agro-industry. Other sectors, such as manufacturing, are sensitive to external factors, and as a result their performance has fluctuated greatly.

Chiang Mai is a mix of "old" and "new" which provides the opportunity to develop new clusters, leverage its cultural heritage, improve the performance of existing key industries, and embrace creativity. Therefore, a proposed roadmap by key government officials, academics and business associations has been drafted with broad but with very specific actions and recommendations for Chiang Mai's development. The strategic roadmap integrates and connects different sectors: 1) software, digital content and IT, 2) handicrafts, arts and design, 3) tourism (creativity and tourism), 4) healthcare (medical tourism, IT in healthcare), 5) urban (including environmental urban development aspects) and social development; and 6) marketing of the city.

**Profile of the Chiang Mai International Food Festival 2011 (CIFF 2011)**

Under the Strategic Roadmap's umbrella for tourism, the Tourism Authority of Thailand's Chiang Mai Bureau in collaboration with the Chiang Mai Restaurant Club, Thailand Restaurant Entrepreneurs Association, and the Chiang Mai Tourism Business Association organized the first "Chiang Mai International Food Festival (CIFF)".

CIFF 2011's Objectives:

- Introduce Thai and international visitors to a diversified international culinary heritage.
- Promote international cultural exchanges that strengthen international relationships.
- Launch Chiang Mai as an international culinary arts center.

- Promote Chiang Mai as an aviation hub for the Greater Mekong Sub-Region.

#### Target Groups

- Chiang Mai Locals.
- Domestic Thai visitors.
- International visitors particularly those from countries that are conveniently linked by direct flights to and from Chiang Mai's International Airport (e.g. Malaysia, Singapore, Korea, Taiwan, China, Laos, Myanmar).
- International tourists.

#### Profile of USA Booth

Size: 7x7 Square Meters (free of charge).

Number of firms in the USA booth offering U.S. products: 3 companies - 1) Rimping Supermarket promoting Pacific Northwest Cherries, 2) Sino-Pacific Company promoting an assortment of U.S. grocery products from Campbell Soup Company (Campbell's Soup, Pepperidge Farm, Prego), Del Monte Food (fruit juice), Hershey Company (chocolate), ConAgra Foods (Hunt's, Pam, Swiss Miss, Wesson), Mars Inc. (M&M's, Snickers), McCormick (seasonings), J.M. Smucker Inc. (Smucker's, Jiff), Tabasco Inc. (sauce), Tree Top Inc. (fruit juice), Welch's Corp (fruit juice, and 3) the Steak House Restaurant promoting U.S. beef, bakeries, and wines.

#### Actual Results and Outcomes

CIFF 2011 was held for the first time in Chiang Mai aimed to promote international and domestic culinary heritages to local Thai and international visitors. In addition, promoting cultural exchanges in order to strengthen international relationships by having diplomatic representation and pavilions promoting cultural heritage from China, France, Germany, India, Italy, Japan, Korea, Peru, Spain, Thailand and USA and an additional 20 local food and beverage companies. The event was officially inaugurated by M.L. Panadda Diskul, the Chiang Mai Governor, Mrs. Duangduan Na Chiang Mai, President of the Chiang Mai Cultural Council, and Mr. Boonlert Buranupakorn, President and CEO of the Chiang Mai Provincial Administration Organization. After officially inaugurating the event, they preceded to tour the premises to meet and greet the different exhibitors. Additional activities at the fair were culinary presentations from the participating countries, cultural performance of individual country's dance and costumes, cooking demonstration by well known chefs, and seminars for visitors' knowledge and entertainment.

The first time CIFF 2011 show was a success as 2,000 visitors per day attended the show. Result of sales from three companies in the USA booth:

- Rimping Supermarket - 350 boxes of cherries or Baht 1.1 million (\$37,000) (5kgs per box at a price at 3,200 baht/box).
- Sino Pacific - about Baht 130,000 in sales (\$4,500) with M&M's and Hershey's as the best sellers.
- The Steak House Restaurant sales of fresh U.S. beef, bakeries, and wines.

#### Recommendations

Post encourages the show organizer to target more F&B professionals such as chefs, F&B managers, restaurants operators, and food processors from Chiang Mai and nearby provinces so the exhibitors are able to build more solid trade relationships.

Post would like to request funds to bring in a chef to give a demonstration in using the latest U.S. techniques and ingredients to increase U.S. product awareness.